

BUCKINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and the

SANITARY INSPECTOR.

1945.

List of Parishes in the Council's Area.

Addington	Marsh Gibbon
Adstock	Middle Claydon
Akeley	Padbury
Barton Hartshorne	Poundon
Beachampton	Preston Bissett
Biddlesden	Radclive-cum-Chackmore
Charndon	Shalstone
Chetwode	Steeple Claydon
Edgcott	Stowe
Foscott	Thornborough
Hillesden	Thornton
Leckhampstead	Tingewick
Lillingstone Dayrell	Turweston
Lillingstone Lovell	Twyford
Luffield Abbey	Water Stratford
Maids Moreton	Westbury

BUCKINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

COUNCIL OFFICES,
SCHOOL LANE,
BUCKINGHAM.

To the Chairman and Members of Buckingham Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my Annual Report to the Ministry of Health in accordance with Circular 28/46.

This is my first report since assuming the appointment of Medical Officer of Health to your district on demobilisation from His Majesty's Forces. Although I have become your Medical Officer only recently, yet I take up this post well acquainted with the area and its problems, for since 1935 I have been responsible for the school medical inspection and the maternity and child welfare work of the district.

The Minister of Health stated in the recent Annual Conference of the Rural District Councils' Association: "Rural districts have not been the victims of Hitler's benefactions, but have been the victims of very many years of deplorable neglect." This neglect has been realized by the Buckingham Rural District Council, which is taking steps to stimulate more interest in the appropriate quarters so that the district may have some of the urban amenities. Thus I find that great strides were being made at the onset of the war with the provision of water and electric power, but three major problems still remain, which will become progressively worse until remedied—housing, sewerage and child-birth.

To parody a popular song of the moment, "Housing is the root of all evil," and as such is being tackled as vigourously as the various shortages and restrictions permit. Sewerage is still largely held in abeyance, but in many villages is as urgent a need as housing. The birth-rate is unusually high and in view of the over-crowded and insanitary state of many dwellings child-birth becomes unduly hazardous under such conditions and could be made much safer if it was carried out in a well-conducted Maternity Home. Maternal mortality is only one of the risks of child-birth, many women date a lifetime of ill-health to a confinement. As the Rural District Council is not responsible for maternity and child welfare it has had to content itself with calling the attention of the appropriate authority to the need for a Maternity Home and asked it to take early action.

I should like to state my appreciation of the kindness and consideration accorded me by the members of the Council. I also wish to thank the Clerk, Mr. Floyd, for his whole-hearted co-operation and the Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Jennings, for his assistance.

A. MICHAEL CRITCHLEY.

A. Summary of Statistics.

			1945	1944
Area (in acres)			54,543	54,543
Population (Registrar-General's estimate) ...			7833	8594
Number of Inhabited Houses (end of year)				2523
Rateable Value			£35,530	£35,343
Rate per £1			11/7 $\frac{3}{4}$	11/8 $\frac{3}{4}$
Sum represented by a penny rate (gross) ...			£140/19/11	£149/1/4

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births:		M.	F.		
Legitimate	74	57		131	133
Illegitimate	8	4		12	7
Birth-rate per 1,000 population				18.26	16.9
" " " (Bucks) ...				16.5	18.3
" " " (England & Wales) ...				16.56	17.6
Still-Births	1	2		3	3
Deaths	48	54		102	92
Deaths per 1,000 population				12.05	11.11
" " " (Bucks) ...				11	10.9
" " " (England & Wales) ...				11.4	11.6
" from Puerperal Causes					
Maternal Mortality					
" " " (England & Wales) ...				1.79	
Infantile Mortality rate:					
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age					
per 1,000 live births				20.9	35.71
Ditto for Bucks				32.9	35.8
Ditto for England & Wales				46	46
Deaths from Measles					
" Whooping Cough					
" Diarrhoea (under 2 yrs. of age) ...					1

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH:		1945			1944		
		M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.
Influenza		2	2	2	1	1	1
Respiratory Tuberculosis		2	2	2	1	1	1
Other Tuberculosis							
Cancer	6	8	14	2	10	12	
Diabetes		1	1	1	1	1	1
Cerebral Hemorrhage	8	10	18	6	2	8	
Heart Disease	14	16	30	13	18	31	
Other Circulatory Diseases	2	3	5	1	1	1	
Bronchitis	4	3	7	6	2	8	
Pneumonia	1	1	2	2	3	5	
Other Respiratory Diseases							
Digestive Diseases	3	1	4	5	1	6	
Nephritis		1	1	2	1	3	
Puerperal Pyrexia & Fever							
Congenital Causes				1	1	2	
Violence	6	6	12	1	2	3	
Other defined Diseases		6	6	3	6	9	
TOTALS	48	54	102	42	48	92	

There has been a slight increase in death-rate, but it has been more than compensated by the almost record birth-rate, with a low infantile mortality of less than one-half of that prevailing in England and Wales as a whole.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The majority of the inhabitants of the area have been engaged in agricultural work. The manufacture of paint and footwear has been carried out in Westbury, but the only large industry was the London Brick Company at Calvert. There has been no evidence that these pursuits have affected the health of the general population, although the "drawers" in the brick industry have an increased susceptibility to respiratory disease, mainly as a result of changes in temperature in the course of their work.

B. General Provision of Health Services.

1. PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Chairman of the District Council—W. Culley, Esq.

Chairman of General Purposes Committee—A. T. Thorne, Esq.
Committee—

T. Close Smith, Esq., J. Culley, Esq., Hon. Mrs. M. Fortescue, Hon. Mrs. Heywood-Lonsdale, Miss R. M. Hubbard, D. R. James, Esq., Hon. A. E. Cubitt, F. H. Dancer, Esq., A. Powell, Esq., Mrs. H. E. Lines, A. E. Bryant, Esq., W. Durrant, Esq.

2. PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS.

Medical Officer of Health.

Janet C. Ronaldson, M.B., D.P.H.
(Until 31st August, 1945).

Then A. Michael Critchley, M.D., D.P.H.

The Medical Officer of Health is also M.O.H. for the Buckingham M.B. and Bletchley U.D.C. and Assistant County Medical Officer for Bucks C.C.

Sanitary Inspector (also Surveyor).

F. T. Jennings, A.R.SAN.I., A.I.S.E., A.INST.B.E.

Assistant Sanitary Inspector.

B. W. E. Makepeace, M.R.SAN.I., M.R.I.P.H., A.M.INST.B.E.
(Until 31st August, 1945).

3. LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The arrangement made with the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service for the School of Pathology, Oxford, to perform pathological investigations continued.

4. AMBULANCE SERVICE.

(a) *Infectious Diseases*.—The ambulance belonging to the North Bucks Joint Isolation Board conveyed infectious cases to the Fever Hospital at Grove.

(b) *Non-Infectious Cases and Accidents*.—The St. John Ambulance Brigade and British Red Cross ambulance stationed at Buckingham has dealt with the needs of the district in a most conscientious manner.

5. NURSING FACILITIES.

There were seven District Nurses working in the Buckingham Rural District, and until November, when the nurse for Akeley left, all seven areas were served by a nurse throughout the year.

6. CLINICS.

(a) *Maternity and Child Welfare*.—Buckingham Rural District has been without sufficient Clinics, but this shortage has been gradually lessened, so that the district was served during 1945 by the following clinics:—

Buckingham (once monthly)	...	M.O., Dr. A. M. Critchley
Calvert (twice monthly)	...	Dr. Doris Critchley
Twyford (,, ,)	...	"
Winslow (,, ,)	...	Dr. A. M. Critchley

The Medical Officer attended each clinic once monthly and the clinics have been well supported, thanks to the enthusiasm of the helpers. Steps are being taken to set up other clinics in the district for the above clinics are not easily accessible from many villages.

(b) *Immunisation Clinics*.—Immunisation against Diphtheria has been carried out at the above clinics, but in addition a special monthly session has been held at the Bucks C.C. clinic, Whale Yard, Buckingham.

(c) *Venereal Disease*.—Cases of venereal disease in the district have received treatment at the Government clinics in Oxford, Northampton and Aylesbury.

7. HOSPITALS.

(a) *Infectious Diseases*.—The North Bucks Joint Isolation Hospital has accepted infectious cases from the area, but great difficulties have been encountered owing to the shortage of staff. Fortunately there have been no severe epidemics in North Bucks, so that the hospital has not been unduly pressed for beds, otherwise the situation would have been serious.

(b) *Tuberculosis*.—Tuberculosis cases from the Buckingham Rural District have been treated at the Berks and Bucks Joint Sanatorium, Peppard. The natural shortage of nursing staff has created many difficulties in tuberculosis schemes throughout the kingdom.

(c) *General Hospitals*.—Voluntary hospitals which served the area were as follows :—

Buckingham Hospital.
Royal Bucks Hospital, Aylesbury.
Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford.
Northampton General Hospital.
National Heart Hospital.

C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

1. WATER.

The North Bucks Joint Water Board supplied every parish with water, but distribution to each individual dwelling in the area has not been completed.

(a) *Quality*.—Satisfactory.

(b) *Quantity*.—Steps have been taken by the Water Board to obtain additional sources of water in order to increase the supply which did not suffice for the ever-expanding demand.

2. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

All the water courses in the district have been constantly polluted and, especially during the dry spells, were a potential danger to health.

3. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The much abused English climate has again saved the district from a major fly-borne epidemic. In common with most other rural areas this district abounded with organic accumulations ideal for the breeding of flies and germs, but fortunately climatic conditions have been adverse for their development, otherwise disease was inevitable.

Prior to the war steps were being taken in England to bring improved living conditions to the rural regions by the inauguration of water and sewerage schemes. In this district the water scheme has been well advanced, but the much-needed sewerage plans have been held in abeyance. The situation in 1945 was as follows :—

(a) *Sewerage Schemes in actual operation*.—Chackmore, Steeple Claydon, Westbury and Marsh Gibbon.

(b) *Schemes sanctioned and authority given to proceed*.—Thornborough and Tingewick.

(c) *Schemes approved.*—Adstock, Akeley, Marsh Gibbon and Padbury.

(d) *Schemes prepared, but not yet approved.*—Charndon and Twyford.

It is to be hoped that in the near future plans will be drawn up for the sewerage of other parishes and that the man-power and supply situation will warrant authority to get on with these urgently needed improvements.

4. WATER CLOSETS.

Progress in the conversion to water closets has been delayed by the inadequacy of the sewerage system in most parishes.

5. REFUSE DISPOSAL.

Quarterly collections of rubbish and salvage have been made and controlled tips have been in constant use at Steeple Claydon and Leckhampstead.

6. SCHOOLS.

Neglect prior to and during the war has resulted in some Village Schools becoming insanitary. The lavatory accommodation in many schools was so bad as to be a potential danger. Personal cleanliness and hygiene have not been taught or encouraged universally and this district has its full share of unsatisfactory schools.

7. SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There were no public swimming baths in the district.

8. ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

No action taken during 1945.

D. Housing.

The country-wide shortage of fit houses has not missed this district. Many dwellings which warrant demolition or extensive re-conditioning have been in continual occupation owing to the lack of alternative accommodation. Houses of all types have become a necessity in order to cater for overcrowded or slum tenants, newly-weds or small families and last, but not least, the aged.

During 1945 eight housing schemes were approved, involving 73 permanent houses. No homes were actually built but advanced preparation on the Steeple Claydon and Tingewlck sites was started for their allotted permanent houses as well as the temporary pre-fabricated dwellings in each.

E. Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector.

I beg herewith to submit a brief report of the work carried out by my Department during the year ended 31st December, 1945.

General Survey of Inspections during Year.

Total number of Inspections made	...	...	1948
Premises inspected on complaint	...	...	84
Dwelling Houses under periodical review	...	...	Nil
Visits paid to houses under Public Health Acts	...	...	7
Visits paid to houses under Housing Acts...	...	...	10
Houses inspected under Public Health Acts	...	...	7
Visits <i>re</i> Water Supply ...	...	...	21
Visits <i>re</i> Drainage	...	...	26
Visits <i>re</i> Refuse Collection	...	...	38
Miscellaneous Visits	...	...	164
Evacuation	...	...	50
Rats and Mice	...	...	13
Petroleum Acts, visits, etc.	...	...	3
Miscellaneous Housing ...	...	...	161
Visits <i>re</i> Sewers and Sewage Disposal Works	...	...	16
Cowsheds and Dairies	...	...	74
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	...	...	15
Visits in connection with Bye-Laws	...	...	11
Schools	...	...	2
Factories	...	...	14
Visits regarding Infectious Diseases	...	...	12
Visits to Bakehouses	...	...	35
Miscellaneous food visits	...	...	37
Fishmongers	...	...	3
Rural Housing Survey—Number of Houses inspected	...	...	866
Visits paid to work in progress	...	...	49
Meetings, Conferences, etc., attended	...	...	123

Notices Served.

(1) Informal Notices	...	...	8
(2) Matters remedied as a result of (1)	...	...	8
(3) Statutory Notices served	...	...	Nil
(4) Reported to Council	...	...	2

Details of Nuisances abated.

Overcrowding	...	...	...	Nil
Accumulation of Refuse	...	...	...	2
Foul Ditches, Ponds, etc.	...	...	...	12
Animals	...	...	...	Nil
Dampness	...	...	...	4
Premises generally	...	...	...	18

Drains and Sewerage.

Water Closets substituted for pails or privies	...	...	6
Drains examined, tested, exposed, etc.	...	...	27
Drains unstopped, repaired, trapped, etc.	...	...	31
Waste-pipes, r.w. pipes, disconnected, repaired	...	...	2
New soil pipes, vent. shafts fixed...	...	...	2
Existing soil pipes or vent. pipes repaired...	...	...	3

Water Supply.

Samples obtained for Analysis	...	...	...	2
Result of above Samples	...	Good, Nil	Bad	2
Action taken in above—Installation of piped supply				2

Bakehouses.

Number on Register	...	...	...	11
Underground Bakehouses	...	...	...	Nil

Cowsheds.

Producers on Register	...	...	...	318
Inspections	...	...	...	74
Contraventions of Regulations	...	...	...	37
Contraventions remedied	...	...	...	37
Improvements to Cowsheds and Dairies	...	...	...	13

Unsound Food.

Miscellaneous Food Visits	...	...	...	37
MEAT.—No record as all animals are now slaughtered in the Government Slaughterhouse in the Borough of Buckingham.				
Approx. weight of food condemned and destroyed	...	147 lbs.		

Disinfections.

Rooms disinfected :

(a) After ordinary Infectious Diseases	...	...	...	9
(b) After Tuberculosis	...	...	...	Nil
(c) Rooms stripped and cleansed	2

Rural Housing Survey.

Total number of Inspections made	806
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F. T. JENNINGS,
Sanitary Inspector.

F. Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and Other Diseases.**1. GENERAL.**

During the year there were outbreaks of Measles, Whooping Cough and Sonne Dysentery ; the last-named outbreak occurred in a Private School.

2. NOTIFICATIONS.

M. F. TOTAL

Dysentery	...	14	10	24
Erysipelas	...		1	1
Measles	...	80	77	157
Pneumonia	...		2	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	...		2	2
Scarlet Fever	...	2	6	8

3. CANCER.

Fourteen deaths were caused by this disease.

4. PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.

No action has been taken under Section 66 of the Public Health Act, 1925.

5. TUBERCULOSIS.

Two persons have died from phthisis.

There have been no cases of pulmonary tuberculosis notified, and none of non-pulmonary.

A. MICHAEL CRITCHLEY,

Medical Officer of Health.

